

Mary, the Holy Mother of God Friday January 1, 2021

World Day of Peace

Today marks the end of the Octave of Christmas with the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. Each of the eight days of the Octave of Christmas, including Christmas Day, celebrates the birth of Jesus. The Octave in the liturgy means every day within the Octave, is the feast all over again.

We have all heard the Christmas song “The Most Wonderful Time of The Year.” Well, it is! The Octave of Christmas, is a time for worship, fellowship and rest just as a Sunday would be. The Octave gives us time to impress upon our souls the mysteries, joys and graces for one of the principal feasts of the Church year. We should celebrate for eight days! Many people rush to take down the tree, take down the decorations, to put Christmas away and get on with the New Year. We shouldn’t be in such a rush. Christmas season is not over until we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord January 10th and enter into Ordinary Time.

Much of our lives are spent rushing around always in a hurry to get to the next thing or event we have planned. In today’s Gospel though, we need to slow down and pay attention to the example Mary gives us. “But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.” Mary chose to ponder the words proclaimed by the shepherds. Mary could have over reacted, got upset, told the shepherds to leave them alone but she didn’t. Did she understand everything she heard? Perhaps not but by taking the words into her heart and sitting with them, she knew this was God’s plan for her.

The same can be true for us. How often do we sit and ponder and really listen for the Truth within us? To ponder means to think carefully about something especially for a noticeable length of time. It is so easy to make up one’s mind quickly without thinking things all the way through. Do we listen for what God has planned for us? If we ponder and listen we will hear the plan God has for us. We will know that God is with us. We can learn to trust just as Mary did.

How appropriate it is to celebrate Mary, the Holy Mother of God, today, on this, New Year’s Day. Mary, the perfect example of perfect love, is our mother too. We can all strive in our efforts to be holy and imitate the perfect love Mary has for Jesus and for us. Mary is ready and willing to help us do this all we need to do is ask!

As we start another year, we have another chance for a new start. God is always willing and ready to make all things new! Let us begin this New Year by giving an overflowing YES to Jesus! We travelled through Advent with Mary. Now let us continue to travel with Mary for the coming year. Run to her in times of need. Mary will intercede for you with her Son, Jesus. Look to Mary to learn how to love others with a pure and holy heart! Remember, slow down, take time to ponder.

Reflection by Julie de Gouw, Pastoral Minister